

Buncombe County
Health & Human Services

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2016



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Behavioral health services include mental health and substance abuse services and are primarily funded by Smoky Mountain Center LME/MCO; however, the County funds a number of initiatives to address service gaps and areas of liability. The FY16 behavioral health budget was \$1,102,500, including \$600,000 in Maintenance of Effort (MOE) funds. MOE funds are statutorily obligated county funds that Smoky Mountain Center LME/MCO administers on behalf of the county. Those mental health investments outside the MOE funds are directed toward priorities that support our core mission and/or Commissioner's directives.

Major Accomplishments

- C3356 – the 24/7/365 crisis center – opened its doors.
- Diversion services provided by RHA Health Services saved Buncombe County Detention Center 145 jail beds.
- Buncombe County Veteran's Treatment Court began serving former service members involved in the local criminal justice system in need of mental health or substance abuse services.
- Seven units designated for "hard-to-house" individuals opened at Woodfin Apartments.
- Since FY11, Pisgah Legal Services has helped 228 individuals in Buncombe County obtain SSI/SSDI benefits from Social Security, valued at over \$29.5 million.
- The Partnership for Substance Free Youth collected nearly 1,000 pounds of prescription drugs via Take Backs and drop boxes placed in the community.



The Comprehensive Care Center at 356 Biltmore Avenue is designed to provide crisis intervention, response, and stabilization services and supports within the context of a recovery-oriented and community resilience system of care. At one location and under one roof, individuals and families will access crisis prevention, intervention, stabilization, and response services embedded within in a full continuum of behavioral health care. Included on site are a behavioral health urgent care, facility based crisis unit, a peer living room, NAMI family support services, and a community pharmacy operated by ABCCM.

Hard to House at Woodfin Apartments

A partnership between Buncombe County Health and Human Services and Homeward Bound encourages permanent supportive housing for the hard to house population. 7 out of 18 units are currently housing 'hard to house' clients. Hard to House clients may have physical and/or behavioral health care needs that often cause housing disruptions. Because many of these clients need supervision, structure, and protection, the security officer paid for by Buncombe County makes it possible for this population to remain safely housed.



Criminal Justice Collaboration Programs

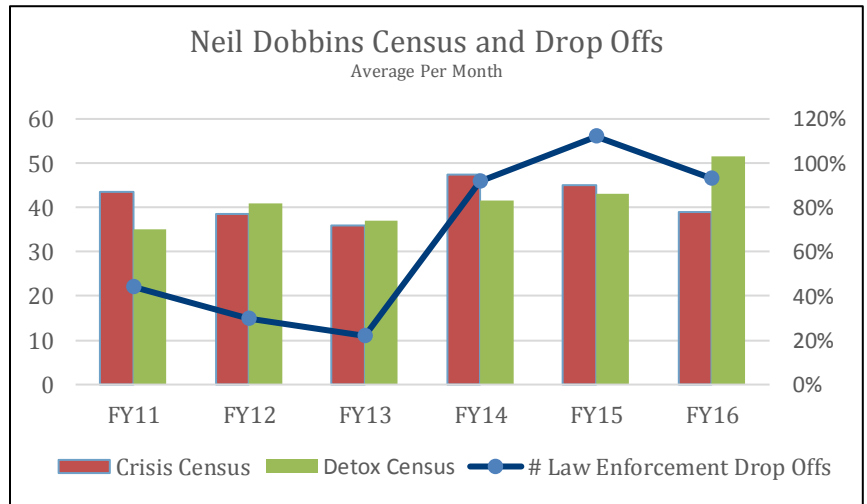
Partnerships with law enforcement and the Courts aim to divert persons from the criminal justice system—saving County dollars and reducing recidivism, which means fewer crime victims and a safer community.

Pre-Booking Services

As part of Buncombe County’s Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) program, law enforcement has the ability to “drop off” persons for a psychiatric evaluation, when appropriate, instead of booking them in the detention facility. Often, an underlying behavioral health issue is the root cause for a law enforcement call. CIT training provides law enforcement with methods to deescalate a potentially volatile situation caused by a behavioral health crisis. A total of 44 members of law enforcement completed CIT training in FY16.

Neil Dobbins operates a 16-bed detoxification and psychiatric crisis unit. In FY16, the combined census was 90.5%; 90% is considered full capacity. Buncombe County residents comprised an average of 61% of the clients, down about 10% from last year. This decrease reflects the increased regional use of the facility by Smoky Mountain LME/MCO.

Law enforcement drop-offs at Neil Dobbins Center also decreased from an average of 56 drop offs per month in FY15 to 46.5 in FY16.



Post-Booking Services

Delivered by RHA Health Services, post-booking diversion efforts aim to save jail resources and connect individuals in need of mental health and substance abuse treatment to appropriate services. RHA provides qualifying individuals with mental health (MH) and substance abuse (SA) case management as well as access to the JUST Program, an alternative to a mental health court. In FY16, the average monthly caseload was 53.7 for mental health case management (17.9% increase from FY15) and 48.1 for substance abuse (5.1% increase).

Through County funding and grant support, RHA also provides administrative support to four problem solving courts. These programs are designed to keep individuals out of the detention center and in community-based treatment.

Jail Diversion Accomplishments

Psycho-education groups	312 detainees/mo.
SA case management	578 contacts
MH case management	645 contacts

Problem Solving Courts –Monthly Caseloads and Graduation Rates

Drug Treatment Court	25 clients; 61%
Family Treatment Court	18 clients; 20%
DWI Court	20 clients; 50%
JUST Program	18 clients; 56%



Prison Reentry Services

The County is the recipient of grants from the NC Governor’s Crime Commission and the NC Department of Public Safety, which support a prison reentry program administered by RHA Health Services.¹ As part of the grant requirements, the program works with individuals who have recently been released from prison and are living in Buncombe County. The program is designed to reduce recidivism and create a stable environment for individuals reentering society.

In FY16, 37.6% were formally admitted to program. Of those,

- 28.1% were successfully linked to housing;
- 78.6% were successfully engaged in employment;
- 60.2% were successfully engaged in vocational/educations programs; and
- only 3.8% recidivated



Veterans Treatment Court

Modeled after drug courts, veterans treatment courts were developed to provide an alternative to incarceration for men and women who have served in one of the five branches of the U.S. Armed Forces and are in need of mental health or substance abuse services. The Buncombe County Veterans Treatment Court² launched in FY16 and admitted 17 veterans with felony charges. The Court is an 18-24 month program during which veterans receive intensive case management, mental health treatment, and/or substance abuse treatment. Its first round of graduates is expected in late FY17/early FY18. Upon successful completion, veterans will have their case dismissed.



Forensic Evaluations

Forensic evaluations and treatment engagement services for Health and Human Services Social Work and jail diversion program clients are provided at C3356 Biltmore. In FY16, 33 referrals were made each month on average. Forensic evaluations are completed for approximately 51.5% of referrals.

Homelessness

Program to Prevent and End Homelessness

In partnership with the City of Asheville, Buncombe County funds a Homeless Coordinator to provide leadership for the Asheville-Buncombe Homeless Initiative Advisory Committee (HIAC) and 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness, as well as administration of federal homeless funds. Since 2005, the HIAC and the Homeless Coalition have implemented “housing first” strategies, which have resulted in a 57% reduction in chronic homelessness in Buncombe County (169 to 72).



¹ Additional county funds are provided to satisfy grant match requirements.

² Buncombe County’s Veteran Treatment Court is primarily funded by the NC’s Governor’s Crime Commission. County funds are provided to support services to participating veterans.



Supportive Housing Programs

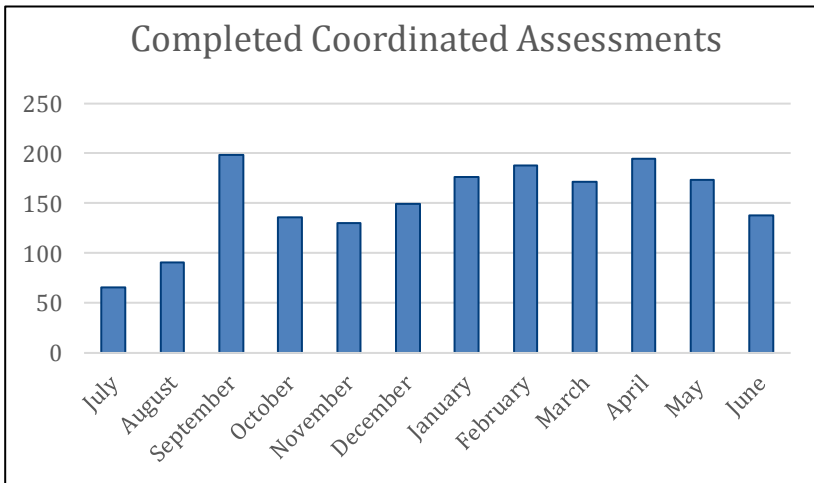
In addition to HIAC, the County provides funds to Homeward Bound to support programs and services aimed at reducing homelessness. Through its Project Rebound and FUSE programs, Homeward Bound provides intensive case management and permanent supportive housing for homeless individuals using the Pathways model. A case manager screens individuals and identifies the care “pathways” that address the client’s most critical near-term needs. Pathways include primary care services, disability application, food security, employment, etc. In FY16, 74 individuals received case management services and achieved 157 pathways.



Supportive Housing Accomplishments

	# People Served	# Pathways Completed
Project Rebound	30	80
FUSE	44	77

As part of its “housing first” programs, Homeward Bound also provides coordinated assessment through its AHOPE day program. Coordinated assessment paves the way for more efficient homeless assistance systems by helping people move through the system faster, offering prevention and diversion resources upfront, and improving data collection and quality. Homeward Bound completed 1,814 coordinated assessments in FY16.



SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) Program



PISGAH
LEGAL SERVICES

Pisgah Legal Services identifies persons who are homeless and may be eligible for disability benefits, and attempts to fast-track the application process with the Social Security Administration.

In FY16, the project leveraged \$3,627,261 in value of benefits, resulting in a leveraging ratio of 1:40. That is, for every county dollar invested in the Project, \$40 are returned to the county over the span of the average entitlements.

SOAR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Approved applications	27
Average time for approval	93 days
Dollars leveraged	\$3.6M



Substance Abuse Prevention and Response

Buncombe County Health and Human Services remains committed to prevention, allotting a portion of its behavioral health funding for prevention programs. With these funds, the County funds the Partnership for Substance Free Youth through RHA Health Services.

In FY16, the Partnership, in collaboration with the community, held 11 Take Backs. Through these Take Backs and drop boxes placed throughout the community, the Partnership collected over 950 pounds of old prescription medications (271% increase from last year). These medications are then safely destroyed and not available for potential abuse. In addition, the Partnership worked with 15 schools in Buncombe County to initiate prevention plans to address youth substance abuse.

